

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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JACK DOYLE'S DAUGHTER.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON.

PART IV. PHEBE'S FORTUNE.

CHAPTER III. "C'EST LE PREMIER PAS."

"No father, no brother, no lover, no friend, no enemy, any more!" Phoebe had sighed on learning that she was absolutely nothing; not even so much as Jack Doyle's daughter. Why a stranger should have paid thousands of pounds for the pleasure of her company was hard to understand, but certainly not harder than anything else that had happened to her since Stanislas Adrianski had first wished her good-evening in the old back garden. She gave the cabman his orders for Harland Terrace, and then, alone at last, fell to thinking—really thinking, almost for the first time that such a thing had happened to her. It was all the harder work, because her thoughts had to deal with such a troop of shadows, all alike eluding her grasp and chasing one another through a mist which was the only substantial thing about them. It had once, ages ago, been her pride to call herself the child of mystery; to know that she was a being apart from her brothers and her neighbours, and to look forward to the time when the king, her father, and the prince, her bridegroom, would come in grand procession and carry her away. Well, the fairy godmother had come with her wand, and had struck father and a bridegroom out of a dead bush, certainly out of nothing else; and all had promised to be the grandest and most beautiful romance ever put into a book, when the bridegroom turned out to be a Stanislas Adrianski, and the father, no father at all. She had a curious kind of

notion in her brain that even the Czar was a phantom, and Siberia nothing more than a name in the air. Perhaps even the Associated Robespierres were no better than a band of ghosts, without any real influence upon the destinies of the living world. But the collapse of her father was the bitterest blow her illusions had yet received. It was a fact, standing out hard among the shadows, that she had been bought and sold like a slave, and treated as one. It was true she had been treated kindly; but still she had been bought, and had been tricked into obedience by the pretence that her purchaser had a right to her beyond what gold could give him, and that—her unaccustomed thoughts came suddenly to an end. What if this incomprehensible purchase were not so incomprehensible after all?

"A slave." Her thoughts had reached that, and she had read of slaves; not only slaves in the Siberian sulphur-mines, toiling among infernal fumes till their living flesh rots away from their bones, but of beautiful Circassians and Georgians, who are bought for the pleasure of sultans and pachas; and she knew something of India, although, till the other day, she had never heard of a rupee. Her picture of our Eastern empire was very perfect indeed, and was composed of roses, Thugs, nightingales, tigers, Suttees, the Vale of Cashmere, Bayaderes, elephants, and the Great Mogul. Where had her father—no; her purchaser, become rich? In India. How? Nobody knew; she had gathered so much worldly knowledge at Cautleigh Hall. No wonder he had kept a young Polish hero at arm's length, if he were in truth a slave-merchant who had extended his operations from Circassia to London. She had always

thought there was something grim and terrible about the man; she had often wondered why he went out every day without having any apparent business, and what he found to do in the library every morning all alone. But if he were engaged in collecting victims for the sewn-up sack and the widow's pyre!

It was an idea. But it was better than a dead bush; and, given the very dearest of broken sticks, Phoebe could make it into a whole forest in the twinkling of an eye, her fancies were hydra-like in their way of springing up as soon as they were cut down, fresh and new. And yet this idea did not come to her quite in the old way. There was something real and reasonable about it—not romantically attractive, as had been the story of Stanislas, now, it was to be hoped, closed for ever. This did not give her the consolation, ever present except when need for action found her wanting of feeling like a heroine in the middle of her second volume. Doyle was very real—more real than Olivia; nearly, if not quite, as real as Phil. In dealing with him, she knew well enough that she would have to do with a master, and “Oh!” she cried out aloud, “if only Phil were here to tell me what to do—to make me do it, whether I liked or no; just as he made me go home!”

Considering that Phil was her enemy the outcry was strange. But had not part of her first despair been, “I have no enemy any more”?

But Phil was not there; even he had given her up, and had gone out of her life for ever. Just then the cab came to a stand, and the driver let down the window and looked in. Had she arrived? And what was to happen now?

“I beg your pardon, miss,” said the man, “but I’ve forgot the exact name of that terrace—it’s somewhere about here, I know.”

Thought is proverbially quick; it is indeed quicker, in some brains, than anything in the world but one. That one thing is the process by which a woman leaps to the bottom of the stairs, while the quickest-minded man is taking no more than three steps at a time. When Phoebe saw anything at all, it was the whole thing at once, all round it, and all through it, and all that it was not, as well as all that it might be. Had she been an astronomer, she would perhaps have failed to see the visible side of the moon, but she would assuredly have drawn a

very accurate map of the side which no mortal eye has ever seen or will ever see; as a mathematician, she might have failed to make three straight lines enclose a space, but she would have succeeded to admiration with two.

So Harland Terrace was somewhere about there; which meant that, close by, was a man who, with no shadow of right, had bought her obedience for only one purpose that her wildest fancy could conceive. That very day, while on the way to the station from Cautleigh Hall, and again while in the train, there had come into her mind the idea of flight in a very definite shape indeed. One by one, since then, she had been slipping the links which kept her from some free world to which she belonged by right of nature; for she had not lost herself in Olivia in vain. Mrs. Hassock had dropped out of sight, Phil had given her up, nobody expected her at home. For the first time in her whole life, she was free; and nobody would miss her if she was never seen again, though no doubt her purchaser would miss the price he had paid for her. Surely she would deserve the sack and the bowstring ten times over if her courage failed her now. No; nobody could want her, except in the capacity of the slave she had always been—not even Phil. There was a sort of fearful joy in feeling that for once and at last she was free from even his seemingly omnipresent strength of hand and will, though she would have given up liberty at his command with scarcely the form of a sigh. At any rate there was no other law that she would obey—two tyrants she could not and would not own. She thought of Phil, and seemed to borrow some strength from the thought of him wherewith to break the last of her chains. Oh, what might not any sort of life be, hard or soft, large or small, in which she would see nobody who knew of her any more!

But there stood the cabman, waiting for orders. To him, Phoebe’s mental leap in the dark had not taken an instant; to her, it had not taken two. There was time, before he could fancy himself unheard, to ask, “But where shall I go?” and to more than half answer it by remembering that she was not penniless for the moment, thanks to Phil. There were inns in London where she could sleep for the night, or at least, if she were too worn out to sleep, to wait for the cool light of another day. She would not even commit herself by passing the night from home, since her

return was unexpected by the man who had cheated her of the duty owed to the father whom she had never known.

One useful thing she had learned from her years of weekly combats with gas-bills and milk-bills—namely, the value of small sums, and how to make them stretch to the very end of their tether. She could not suppose that the two or three pounds, so far as she could remember their number without counting, would not be enough to last her till—till what? Well, anyhow till they were gone.

"I want to go," said she, with a firm voice but a beating heart, "to an hotel."

"Hotel, miss? I thought it was 'terrace' you said when I took you up—and here I've been coming out of my road, may be, a matter of miles, and my horse getting as beat as beat, and no wonder. It ain't my fault, nor his, when a lady don't speak plain."

"I'm very sorry, I'm sure," said Phoebe. "But—but I only want to go somewhere for the night; any hotel that's pretty near will do."

"Well, miss—it's not my fault when a lady don't know her own mind. 'Twas Harland Terrace you said—I remember now."

"Never mind that," said Phoebe, now feeling it absolutely impossible to go back to the house which was her home no longer. "I've changed my mind. It's too late, and I'm not expected," she went on, with suspicious anxiety, feeling that some excuse was needed even to a chance cabman, for the only bold thing she had ever done, except in her own mind. "I must go to an hotel. There's a large one at the station, isn't there? and if we're near—Harland Terrace," she said, hurrying over the name as if it bit her, "it can't be far. I'll go there."

"Just as you please, miss," said the cabman; "only if you change your mind again, don't say it's my fault, that's all."

The deed was done. She wished that she had never mentioned Harland Terrace; but, at any rate, she had not given the number of the house, and she could leave the hotel long before any enquiries could be made—even before the news could reach her purchaser that she had escaped from Cautleigh Hall. And now that the deed was really done, and done, as she meant with all her might, beyond recall, her fear fell asleep, and her spirits rose. No more Stanislas, no more Phil; all the shadows behind her, and an open untried

ocean, with every wave a hope, stretching full before.

At last she reached the door of the hotel. It was not yet midnight, and she was dazzled and bewildered, in more than one sense, by the glare of the hall. For a moment she did not know what to say or what to do, and her old shyness, when brought face to face with common things, returned in full force upon her. Nothing would have surprised her less than to feel Phil's hand laid upon her arm—she would not have started. And when this fancy passed, and her eyes recovered from the sudden glare, what would the waiters think of her? What would the landlord or landlady say to her? What sort of enquiries were made in great hotels? For she felt sure that there was something about her, and about the manner of her coming, that must reflect the strangeness she felt upon passing what was not merely the threshold of an inn, but of a whole new world. If Phil had been there, she knew perfectly well that her whole adventure would have melted into air. It was almost a disappointment rather than a relief, when she found that a young lady, well dressed, and travelling with a very respectable amount of luggage, was received as indifferently as if such arrivals happened every hour.

It was amazing how easily everything seemed to go now that the first step—Phoebe's first real step alone—had once been made. She was not the first of her sex to find out, by pleasant experience, that nobody, not even a seasoned rolling stone like Ronaine, finds unfamiliar travel so smooth as a young woman who travels alone and has never travelled before. Poor men have to shoulder their way, or go to the wall; rich men have to pay their way willingly, or be made to pay it against their will. But a girl has only to be—for your waiter has always a knightly heart, though he knows by sad experience that no true woman ever parts, except under compulsion, with small change. She who swallows golden camels daily will strain at one gnat, while her brother will, without a thought, swallow silver gnats equal in weight to six camels. Phoebe hardly knew what orders she gave; for that matter, she could have sworn she had given none, beyond a "yes" and a "no." And yet, while Phil was swallowing Irish whisky, adulterated with narcotics, in Ronaine's den, the adventuress for whom he had been breaking his life

was, to her eternal shame as a heroine, making up for the loss of her dinner in Lincolnshire by a midnight supper in London. With all her faults, Phoebe had never fancied starvation a virtue, and Mrs. Hassock's sandwiches were a very old story now.

How long was yesterday? How long is it since Phoebe met Stanislas under the terrace at Cautleigh Hall? Barely four-and-twenty hours had passed since then, when Phoebe opened her eyes in the London hotel to which chance had carried her. Within four-and-twenty hours she had tried to save a Polish proscrip from the knout and the sulphur mines, had lost her watch and jewels, had travelled to London, had escaped from home, and had found her career; had found that her father was not her father, and that her enemy was Phil. Four-and-twenty hours! Nay, four-and-twenty years. She had slept, and when she woke she no more knew who she was or where she was, than the caliph, who lived a lifetime during the instant between plunging his head under water and lifting it out again.

She lay on in her white over-soft bed luxuriously, thinking over the song of her life with its ever-recurring burden:

"I am free! no more Stanislas, no more Phil!"

If Phil had given her up to her own devices, she, at any rate, had the revenge of having given up Stanislas, whom she now knew, in her first sensation of perfect freedom, to have been her burden even when honour had forced her to make that hero her pride. Of discovery, as she lay there collecting herself in the same pale sunshine which had made Ronaine miserable for half an hour—she had no longer any fear. Nay, she could not realise that her whole life had not been a dream; and, had it not been for Phil, she could not have known herself for the same Phoebe who, worn out and fevered with a day's lifetime, had thought twice before breaking the last of her chains.

Could it be only yesterday morning that she had woke up in fear and trembling at Cautleigh Hall, which had been for weeks her home? It seemed impossible—still more impossible that within six-and-thirty hours had been begun and ended the whole drama which had ended in her being here, and free. So she was never to be ruled by Phil again. . . . There was an end of her luxury, and she sprang from her bed as

fresh and healthy as a lark after yesterday's long hours of torture, and as eager to face unknown fortune as an inland-born child to wet its feet with the sea.

But when she had gone through the duty of breakfast, with less appetite than freedom should have given her, and when she had to face the fact that a new day was before her, with at least as many hours in it as that endless yesterday had contained, she felt that those hours were not likely to be in complete accord with her healthy waking. She had to take out her purse, and count the number of sovereigns it contained. There was some silver, but the sovereigns were only three. And how far would three sovereigns go? She could have reckoned to a halfpenny in the old times, but the gilt mirrors, in which she saw some twenty Phœbes, did not speak of expenses upon the old suburban scale. They might carry her over another day.

"If Phil were here, he would know where I ought to go and what I ought to do," thought she.

But the very thought gave its own answer. He would say "Go home." No; after all, it was best to be free from Phil.

At any rate, she could not remain indoors. Nobody in the house seemed to care what she did, and, though nobody had ever cared, the general carelessness on her account seemed something more complete even than when she had been left by her pretended father to kill the time with old plays.

She knew enough of her own neighbourhood to be aware of her dangerous nearness to Harland Terrace, and enough of her owner's habits to time her outgoing so as to run the least possible risk of meeting him on her way to she knew not where. The morning's reflection was so far sound that it had not in the least affected her views as to the business of her purchase and sale. People do not buy their own daughters—people do buy slaves. There was something excitingly odd in passing by the very end of Harland Terrace, and wondering what her purchaser would think if he could, by some chance, see his escaped slave. But scarcely had she passed the corner where she had once met Stanislas than she caught herself wondering: "Suppose I should meet Phil?" and then, having dismissed that fear as too alarmingly good to be true, she set herself deliberately to wonder: "Where am I going, now that I am out of doors?"

She had read, in more than one of her novels, how the heroine, finding herself alone in the world, goes straight to some great musician, sings to him, and in three days becomes the greatest prima donna in the world. But, alas! Phœbe was not only ignorant of the address of any great musician, but she could not sing. Her accomplishments were Irish snakes; she could not even so much as teach any. Had she been a heroine with a contralto voice, or even a she-villain with a soprano, the gates of the world would have flown open at the sound. But she could not call to mind a single precedent for a heroine being taken on her own general merits, except by a hero.

She had purposely rambled beyond all the familiar streets, and had reached a more interesting if less interesting neighbourhood, when the instinct of elective affinity brought her to a stand at a shop-window, in which hung, among various rubbish, an engraving of Mrs. Siddons as the tragic muse.

"Of course I know what I want," thought she.

A certain recklessness seized her, born of liberty. There was nothing now that she might not dare. Why should she any longer shudder on the brink, when in London itself the world to which her heart belonged seemed beckoning to her with open arms? It was not the portrait of Mrs. Siddons which had suggested to her the career that had become her own while reading Olivia's part in *Loss and Gain* at Cautleigh Hall. There was the world into which, as she saw it, daily prose does not intrude—in which one may live all one's lives at once without fear of waking. Only, how did people begin?

Perhaps Phil would have known. No, Phil would not have known; he never went to plays. She was not even sure that he did not think them wrong. Of course actresses were paid—an important consideration for a girl who had only three sovereigns and some loose silver in the world, and had been robbed of all her trinkets yesterday. And yet were people really paid for living their own lives—all their own lives? That seemed strange. She had always understood that people were paid for mathematics, and law-copying, and washing clothes, and selling milk, and other unpleasant and incomprehensible things. Why should people be paid for doing what they enjoy? "Yet one must live," she sighed. "I think Phil enjoyed

his mathematics, and he was paid for them all the same."

And in short her heart knew, if her head did not, what she had come out to do. Her steps were bent in one direction as surely as a hound's on the scent, and even more surely. Once in her life, and once only, she had seen a play—that never-to-be-forgotten night when the sight of a certain violoncello had spoiled her pleasure for the hour, but had not discoloured a single memory. The name of that house was now to her what Mecca is to the Mussulman; even more, for it was the only name of the sort that was more to her than merely a name. For other things she might have no courage. But of the entrance to her own true life she had no real fear. She reached that entrance at last, the Phœbe of feeble will, flushed and frightened, but the Phœbe who had found herself, knowing whither she had come and why. She had come to her own place to claim her own.

The daylight look of that house was so forbiddingly dismal that one half of her heart dragged back, while the stronger half, seeing beyond the seeming, drew her on.

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, AND DEATHS.

ALTHOUGH the ladies are credited with a greater amount of curiosity than the male sex, as to the contents of the brief biographical items that appear daily in our newspapers in the column set apart for their reception, it must be confessed the birth, marriage, and death announcements have an interest for everyone.

The first is a list in which we may suppose all our readers have already appeared, although anonymously, and at a time when they were utterly unconscious of the notoriety thus early thrust upon them. The second is one in which hopeful lovers are ever longing to see their names. The last heading is one under which all our names must ultimately appear, for, as that great authority on births and deaths, Mrs. Gamp, says: "It is just as certain as being born, except that we can't make our calculations so exact."

It might be supposed that these announcements of births, marriages, and deaths, so interesting and valuable as we have found them to be, would early have found a place in our newspapers. Such, however, was not the case until they

had reached a pretty mature age, although the earliest representative of our newspaper, the *Acta Diurna* of the Romans, contained such lists.

The first paper in Britain published at stated intervals for the dissemination of intelligence, was the *Weekly Newes*, the first number of which was published in London on the 23rd of May, 1622. It was destitute of advertisements, and indeed contained very little news. The first advertisement appeared on the 2nd of April, 1647, in Number Thirteen of a weekly paper called *Perfect Occurrences of Every Daie* journal in Parliament and other Moderate Intelligence—a name that would make our newsboys frantic—and relates to “A Book applauded by the Clergy of England, called *The Diune Right of Church Government*.” For several years booksellers were the only advertisers, but as the newspapers began to circulate more among the less educated classes, other kinds of advertisements appeared, and the columns gradually assumed a more business-like aspect. The *Mercurius Politicus*, of September 30th, 1658, contained the first trade advertisement, which relates the charms of the new “drink called by the Chineans *Tcha*, by other nations *tay alias tee*.”

Almost the last class of advertisement that seems to have obtained admission into the columns of our newspapers is that now familiarly known as the birth, marriage, and death announcements.

The *Times* now publishes more such announcements than any other paper, and the sum paid daily for such advertisements cannot be less than forty pounds; but about fifty years ago the long column of small type which we now see in that paper was rarely represented by more than half-a-dozen announcements in large type. It is curious that at the time its columns were filled with long lists of the killed and wounded in the Peninsula and at Waterloo, there rarely was the notice of a death at home.

If we turn from the newspapers to the monthly magazines of the same period, a different state of affairs presents itself. There we find our favourite items receiving the attention their importance deserves. If we look for instance at the *Gentleman's Magazine* for January, 1804, when the *Times* contained its two or three notices, we find it devoting eleven pages of small type to the announcement of about forty births, fifty marriages, and two hundred deaths; and the other magazines, with

very few exceptions, were equally liberal with their space, for which they do not seem to have charged. Some, like the *Edinburgh Magazine and Review*, which was commenced in October, 1773, gave their readers the brief intimation such as our newspapers now communicate, only on rare occasions giving an obituary of any length; while others, like the *Scots' and Gentleman's*, often devoted a column to the biography of the deceased, a practice which in after years was of considerable value to the compilers of biographical books.

The most gossiping notices we have seen are those in the *Scots' Magazine*, which was born in 1739, and died in 1826. Other periodicals told anecdotes only of the dead, but it had often something racy or curious to tell about the born or the married.

In our newspapers when twins are the interesting little strangers whose arrival is announced, we are sometimes favoured with the information that “all are doing well;” but that is meagre intelligence compared with what the *Scots' Magazine* loved to convey when recording similar occurrences, as the following extract shows:

“Paris, September 19, 1786, the wife of Charles Carone, formerly a grenadier, and now a labouring-man at Dampierre, was on the 25th and 26th of June, brought to bed of four children, all alive at this moment; they were each of them fourteen inches long when born; the mother suckles two of them, and the two others are out at nurse. It was seven years since this woman had borne any children, and in eight days after her delivery she attended the market of Saint Amand.”

This reads like a paragraph of “news;” but appeared in the ordinary place allotted for births, etc. So strong is the spirit of emulation among the fair sex, that a fortnight later, as we learn from the same source, a woolcomber's wife in Aberdeen followed suit with another quadruple birth, but another lady, this time in Lancashire, astonished the officiating Mrs. Gamp by giving birth to five children, all of whom unfortunately died.

Here are a couple of highly meritorious ladies: “The wife of Absalom Bluit, dancing-master, at Kelso, of her eleventh child in twelve years. By a former wife he had twenty children in twenty-one years, being thirty-one children in all, viz., twenty-four sons and seven daughters, all single births, of whom three only are living.”

The ladies are proverbially shy in acknowledging their ages, and middle-aged damsels in particular think little of striking off a few years. There seems, however, to be one circumstance which can make a lady boast of her age, judging from the *York Herald*, of September 27th, 1828: "On the 23rd inst., in the sixty-first year of her age of a son, at Melbourne near Pocklington in this county, Elizabeth, the lady of the Reverend Joseph Watkinson, one of the people called Ranters." The reverend ranter's opening words give one the idea that the announcement of a death is to follow, and, indeed, if three words be omitted, it reads as a very solemn intimation of the good lady's decease.

"Led to the altar," has long been considered the correct newspaper phrase instead of the more vulgar words, "married" or "wed;" but the *San Francisco Newsletter*, and other Transatlantic papers, have gone further, and altered the familiar titles of births, marriages, and deaths, into the more poetical ones of the cradle, the altar, and the tomb. A Chicago editor adopted the following novel style of announcing "joy in the house." "The editor of the Chicago Post acknowledges the receipt this morning from the authorised source, of a personal item, of the masculine persuasion, weighing nine pounds."

We have been told the weight of one child, and the length of others, but have heard no whisper of the names the youngsters are to get, a matter surely of some interest, judging from the curiosity evinced in church at an infant's baptism. This want is now supplied in *Life and Work*, a magazine of the Church of Scotland, which has a heading of baptisms, in addition to the orthodox three.

Turning to the marriages in the *Scots' Magazine*, for 1786, we find two taking place in January, within a week of each other, which are remarkable for the great disparity in the ages of each bride and bridegroom. "John George, Esq., of Norwood, aged eighty-two, to Miss Whitely, aged nineteen. Mr. George had been a widower only six weeks, and had been married to his first wife sixty years." The other is that of "Elias Needham, aged eighteen, to Mrs. Horton, aged eighty-four."

Two old men got married a few months later, who were evidently devoid of the elder Mr. Wellers horror of widows. "W. Barber, upwards of thirty years in the Guards, to Mrs. Bates, at the Royal Oak in Walton. This is her fourth husband,

and his third wife; he is near seventy-five, and she near seventy." The other marriage took place at Inverkeithing, between a man aged eighty-seven and a woman aged seventy-three. "Being his fifth wife, he was the fourth husband to his fourth wife." A bachelor and an old maid of Lyme Regis were married, "whose ages together amounted to one hundred and fifty-five; and they went to church on crutches attended by a vast concourse of people."

The announcement of the marriage of the Earl of Shaftesbury to Miss Webb, on July 17th, 1786, is followed by the account of his lordship's challenge by an unsuccessful rival immediately after the ceremony. The would-be duellist, we are informed, "was taken to a magistrate and bound over to keep the peace."

It is not uncommon to find the bride described in the old magazines as "a most amiable young lady," and the amount of her dowry is frequently stated. Thus a banker's daughter is said to have "brought a fortune of eighty-three thousand three hundred and thirty-three pounds sterling." The *Edinburgh Weekly Magazine* of August 12th, 1773, announces the marriage of a minister to "Lady Bagraw, a young widow lady with a handsome fortune, and entirely suitable to the character of a clergyman." The *New Ladies' Magazine* (1786) thus announces a runaway match: "At Gretna Green, Benjamin Ruddel, an eminent grocer and tallow-chandler of Elton, to Miss Fortesque, only daughter of Mr. Fortesque, an agreeable young lady with a handsome fortune." Another marriage is recorded in the same magazine as having taken place "after a courtship of twenty-seven years." Of the seventeen marriages announced in the *Yorkshireman* of April 8th, 1837, one is said to have taken place "after a tedious courtship of thirty minutes," and of another the bride, who is stated to be a greengrocer, "has withstood the blasts of fifty winters."

Before quitting this branch of our subject we may notice that the *Scots' Magazine* gives the marriages first, then the births, and lastly the deaths. In the other magazines we have seen the orthodox order prevails. We may also note in passing that some American papers have additional sections headed "alliances" and "divorces." We have seen a "betrothal" announcement in the *Greenock Telegraph*; the intimation of the marriage of the parties, Germans, appearing next day. The publication of an engagement in this way would greatly

simplify the labours of breach of promise juries.

Not approving of the brief biblical obituary "and he died," the old magazines delighted in mentioning some idiosyncrasy of the deceased, or peculiarity in the cause of death, for the delectation of their readers. The Gentleman's Magazine of 1804 tells us of a man "who went to a dancing-school at seventy," another "never wore a hat," and another "died raving mad." We are told that a ballet lady on her deathbed "earnestly entreated her husband to marry again." The Scots' Magazine of 1786 tells of an old woman bedridden for thirty years who never "during that period would suffer a fire in her room." Mary Noble, of Leicester, "had kept her bed for fifty-two years, and during that space ate no meat nor drank anything but tea and water, till within the last year she was compelled to take something rather better. She used to smoke a great deal, but for some time was not able to light her pipe." Thomas Brown, of Drayton Green, would have done well had he followed the example to a certain extent. "This gentleman was originally a pawnbroker, and retired with sixty thousand pounds. He was able to drink six bottles of port at a sitting, and frequently did so. This brought on the black jaundice, of which he died. About two years ago his son shot himself in his father's presence one night over their liquor, when the rest of the family were retired to rest." The remarks on Mr. Egelsham's death are not very complimentary. "He was a character not unknown in the regions of politics, porter, and tobacco. Having from nature a remarkable squint, to obviate the reflections of others he assumed the name of Winkey. He died overwhelmed with age, infirmities, and poverty." Damp beds at inns are frequently given as the cause of death. "At Plymouth Dock, of a fever caught by sleeping in a damp bed at an inn in Cornwall, aged twenty-four, the Rev. Samuel Nanjulia. He was to have been married in a few days." Another gentleman's death is said to have been caused by "a mortification occasioned by cutting a corn." He was a fortunate man who died aged one hundred and twenty-four years, "was never married, nor felt sickness. At one hundred and eight he became a Capuchin, and died in that order." "John Thomas, several years cellar-keeper at the King's Bench Prison," determined to have a merry funeral.

"Twelve years ago he had a coffin made for the reception of his remains, and it was constantly kept in his bedroom. When the coffin was delivered, he deposited in it wine, brandy, and rum for regaling the persons that should attend his funeral." The funeral of Zachariah Aldridge was more sedate. "He was interred in linen, and the bells tolled in different parishes. As he had been fond of planting and digging, at the desire of his disconsolate widow, an excellent sermon was preached from the text: 'A certain man planted a vineyard.'" The epitaph on Edward Purdon, to be found among Goldsmith's poems, was first published in the obituary column of the Edinburgh Weekly Magazine of the 12th of August, 1773. All that is said of poor Nollhimself in another Edinburgh Magazine is that "he was well-known in the literary world." The last old obituary we give is from the Scots' Magazine of 1786. "At Whittlesea, Isle of Ely, in the eighty-fifth year of her age, Mrs. Mary Speechly, a woman of great knowledge and skill in the midwifery business which she practised for forty-two years, and brought into the world the surprising number of four thousand two hundred and ninety-five children, as appears by a register that she regularly kept."

Although we may have smiled at the peculiarities of many of these old obituaries, it must be admitted all those of the present day are not what they should be. If parents will give their children pet names in addition to their baptismal ones, let their use be confined to the nursery. When we read of the death of some little girl of tender years, we cannot but sympathise with the bereaved parents, but when we see it noted in parenthesis that her pet name was "Topsy-wopsy," our emotions incline more towards the humorous than the pathetic.

Although three shillings is charged by the Times in addition to the six shillings charged for the insertion of an ordinary obituary if any compliment be paid to the memory of the deceased, that does not prevent the advertisers from indulging in panegyric. Nor does the leading journal intend the extra charge to be prohibitive, else it would be larger, and the additional and unnecessary section entitled In Memoriam would not appear.

We quote the following from the Universal Magazine of 1811, and offer it to the consideration of our newspaper editors: "As a means of correcting the vanity of sur-

vivors in recording the newly discovered virtues of their deceased friends, the Tyne Mercury suggests the following scale of charges :

"If the name and age of the defunct simply are inserted, no charge.

"If the defunct is to have a good character, seven shillings.

"If deeply regretted by numerous inconsolable friends, ten shillings.

"If to be universally lamented, and never to be forgotten, twelve shillings and sixpence.

"Pious resignation, manly fortitude, etc., to furnish separate items."

Many of the American newspapers still keep up the quaint style of obituary we have been illustrating, but as these panegyric effusions may have been noticed by many of our readers, we will give only three examples, which we quote from the American papers themselves, and not from any home facetiæ column. Having given the usual particulars, the obituary proceeds to say of the deceased lady : "We could say much in her favour as a companion ; and her family of seven children have grown up to manhood. Her neighbours and acquaintance do sympathise with us. She was urged to take liquor to ease her pain, but she could say to the tempting bowl as God said to the sea, 'I say unto you, hitherto shalt thou come but no further; here shall thy proud waves be stayed (!)' After telling how she wanted her earthly goods disposed, her last words were : 'I want you should forgive me,'" etc. The obituary of little Jenny states her to have been "a universal favourite ; the church was filled with a large and sympathising congregation." Then follow eight verses, of which we give the first :

We've parted with our Jennie
And laid her down to rest,
She's gone to join the angels,
In the home where all is blessed.

The late Mr. Comstock, of Freeport, has four verses in his praise ; we select one :

He is gone, the Paragon of Nature,
He sings sweet anthems to his Creator.
His life was short and free from guile,
In death he wore a heavenly smile.

BALZAC AND ALEXANDRE DUMAS.

ALTHOUGH, perhaps, in a literary point of view, no two writers ever less resembled each other than the profound and ingenious author of the *Comédie Humaine* and the brilliant chronicler of the *Mousquetaires*

and *Monte Cristo*, there was yet in one respect a striking similarity between them ; namely, in what may be termed their chronic financial embarrassment, a state of things attributable, in the case of Dumas, to his own improvidence and reckless prodigality, and in that of Balzac, partly to his carelessness in money matters, and partly to the comparative modicity of his resources. While the former, thanks to his marvellous fertility of invention and ever increasing popularity, was constantly in the receipt of large sums spent even more quickly than they were earned, the income of the latter, we are assured by his intimate friend Léon Gozlan, never in his most prosperous days exceeded ten or twelve thousand francs a year. It is not therefore surprising—their tastes and habits taken into consideration—that both of them were continually in debt ; and if by chance they happened to have a louis in their pocket never knew how to keep it there. These and other equally characteristic peculiarities have been duly noted in the anecdotal records of the time ; and it is possible that a few such reminiscences, gleaned from the most authentic sources, and in some instances hitherto unpublished, may not be deemed uninteresting.

No man had a more implicit confidence in his own lucky star than Balzac, or indulged in more sanguine anticipations respecting the future ; far from being discouraged by repeated failures and disappointments, his active brain was incessantly hatching some new project which, until superseded by another even more absurdly impracticable, he regarded as an infallible stepping-stone to fortune. Meeting Henri Monnier one day on the boulevard he confided to that genial humorist his latest scheme for becoming a millionaire. "Listen attentively," he said, "and you will understand that this time I have hit upon an idea worth cultivating. Nothing can be more simple. I shall first take a shop on the Boulevard des Italiens."

"Very good ; and then ?"

"Then I shall have painted over the door in letters of gold, 'Honoré de Balzac, grocer.' That alone is a master-stroke, for every one will be eager to see me serving the customers and wearing the traditional apron ; it will be five hundred thousand francs in my pocket without the shadow of a doubt. Follow my calculation : supposing that each person enters my shop, and no one will be able to resist the temptation, spends only a sou, as I shall gain half on what I sell, that will make so

much a day; and by the end of the year the profits will be fabulous, positively fabulous!"

"Very likely," gravely replied Monnier. "Meanwhile, lend me five francs on the chance!"

Balzac's country house, Les Jardies, built after his own design, stood on a sloping piece of land between Ville d'Avray and Sèvres; and it would be difficult to imagine a locality less adapted for the purpose. It was all up and down hill, with scarcely a yard of level ground about it for a tree to grow; moreover, in the original plan the staircase had been entirely forgotten, so that the inmates were compelled to shift as they could with one subsequently constructed on the outside of the house. Nevertheless, its owner was extremely proud of his acquisition, and cherished the flattering belief that all the expenses incurred by him would soon be defrayed by the sale of his pineapples, which he imagined would bring him in at least two hundred thousand francs a year. As it turned out, when the first crop had been gathered, he discovered that, far from proving a source of profit, each separate fruit had cost him twenty francs.

When he had once conceived an idea, however impracticable, he never rested until he had carried it into execution, nor allowed himself to be in the slightest degree influenced by difficulties which would have appeared insuperable to anyone else. Théophile Gautier relates that one morning, while busily engaged on his weekly feuilleton for *La Presse*, he was suddenly startled by the arrival of Balzac in a state of great excitement, who without further preamble announced that on the following day he was about to read a drama to the manager of the Porte Saint-Martin. "Ah," said Gautier, putting aside his manuscript, and preparing to play the part of listener, "you wish me to tell you what I think of it!" "Stop a minute," returned the other; "it is not written yet, and that is what I want to consult you about." "Not written!" said the astonished Théophile; "what do you mean?" "Why, the fact is," replied Balzac, "I must have money, and the only way to obtain it is for us to put our heads together and get the thing ready." "Between this and to-morrow!" exclaimed Gautier. "Impossible! Even if it were written, there would not be time to copy it." "Pooh, pooh!" was the answer, "I have settled it all; you shall write one act, Ourliac another, Laurent Jan the third, De

Belloy the fourth, and I will do the fifth. Each one will consist of four or five hundred lines, and nothing can be easier than to complete it in time if we work with a will." Théophile stared at his visitor in utter amazement. "But, my good fellow," he objected, "you forget that you have not told me the subject of the piece." "Oh," said Balzac, shrugging his shoulders, "if you want me to tell you that, we shall never have done!"

It may be added that the apocryphal drama in question eventually became a reality under the title of *Vautrin*, and after meeting with a stormy reception on the night of its production, was next day withdrawn "by order" from the bills; mainly owing to the ill-advised audacity of its principal interpreter, Frédéric Lemaitre, who had persisted in adopting a "make up" exactly similar to the usual coiffure of Louis Philippe. It is more than doubtful, however, whether the piece, apart from this untoward circumstance, could possibly have attained even a temporary success, the inexperience of the dramatist betraying itself more or less in every scene. With all his talent, Balzac, like George Sand, was a perfect novice in the art of constructing a plot and developing it effectively; his dialogue was brilliant but lacked terseness, and his incidents were so crowded together and so utterly unconnected with each other as to puzzle and weary the spectator instead of interesting him. These defects, equally apparent in *Les Ressources de Quinola*, and *La Marâtre*, contributed not a little to the failure of both dramas; and their author, convinced—rather late in the day—of his own incompetency in such matters, subsequently consented, although not without reluctance, to avail himself of the experience of Clairville in arranging *Madame de Marneffe*, an episode of *Les Parents Pauvres*, for the Gymnase, where, thanks to the talent of the charming Rose Chéri, it enjoyed a profitable run, but is now totally forgotten. His best dramatic production, *Mercadet*, the only one which still keeps the stage, was not performed until after his death when M. Montigny, the late manager of the Gymnase, and an excellent judge of scenic effect, after perusing the manuscript entrusted it for certain necessary alterations and curtailments to D'Ennery, and assigned the principal character to Geoffroy, who played it admirably. Some years later it was transplanted to the Comédie Française, with Got in the title part, and has ever since

maintained an honourable place in the repertory of that theatre; it has also furnished our own Charles Mathews with one of his cleverest personations, Mr. Affable Hawk.

Balzac's handwriting was the despair of printers, and the mere announcement of a new work from his pen spread terror and desolation among the correctors and compositors attached to the establishment patronised by him. Not only were his hieroglyphics difficult to decipher, but what was infinitely worse, every proof sheet sent to him was returned so covered with additions and marginal annotations as to render an entirely fresh "setting up" indispensable. In one of his works—*La Peau de Chagrin*, if I remember rightly—no less than three proofs of a single sheet were required; the third, when it had received his final corrections, being, if possible, more illegible than the other two. After many fruitless attempts to discover the meaning of one particular phrase, the printer, as a last resource, sent it back to the author, requesting him to explain its signification; to which the latter replied that if the passage in question was Greek to them, it was Hebrew to him, and they had better strike it out altogether, as he could neither read it nor recollect what he intended to write.

Balzac was twice an unsuccessful candidate for the Academy, the reason given for his non-reception being on both occasions the same, namely, that his financial position was not sufficiently independent to justify the committee in electing him as a member. On learning his second rejection, he remarked to Charles Nodier that although he was now refused admittance on account of his poverty, he might some day be rich enough to decline the honour. But that day never came.

On Alexandre Dumas's first arrival in Paris, one of his earliest visits was to General Foy, an old friend of his father. The general, anxious to be of service to the young provincial, questioned him as to his capabilities, but received most discouraging answers, his intended protégé confessing that he knew nothing of mathematics or geometry, very little of the classics, and less of jurisprudence. "That's unlucky," said his patron, "but never mind, give me your address, and I will see what can be done." Dumas wrote down on a slip of paper the name of the hotel—a very cheap one in the Quartier Latin—where he was staying, and

handed it to the general, who had no sooner cast his eye over it than he exclaimed in a cheery tone, "Bravo, young man; I shall have news for you before long; your handwriting is superb." He was as good as his word, for a week later the future author of *Henri Trois* received his appointment as one of the under-secretaries of the Duke of Orleans, at a salary of twelve hundred francs a year; and, on returning to thank his *Mécénas* for his kindness, expressed a hope that although he was now about to gain a living by his penmanship, he might some day be able to earn a better one with his pen.

His character was a mixture of vanity and naïveté, the latter predominating. When Amédée Achard brought out his clever story, *Belle Rose*, he sent a copy to his brother novelist, and meeting him soon after, asked if he had read it. "Certainly," replied Dumas, "and I found it almost as amusing as if I had written it myself."

"Sire, I am the son of my works," he remarked on one occasion to Louis Philippe. "That I can readily believe," said the citizen king; "I have heard more than once that you were not their father."

He was a great admirer of Madame Ristori, and on seeing her play *Maria Stuarda*, enthusiastically declared that she combined in her own person the talent of Mars, Dorval, Talma, and Kean. His neighbour in the stalls, an equally fervent worshipper of Rachel, having ventured timidly to suggest that the great actress of the *Théâtre Français* had also excelled in the part, Dumas would not admit the possibility of any comparison between them. "No one but a perfect Italian scholar," he said, "can properly appreciate Ristori. Do you know the language well?"

"As well as you know French," replied the other.

"Exactly what I thought," contemptuously retorted Alexandre. "Then, my good sir, you know nothing, absolutely nothing!"

The following anecdote, although more than once reprinted, is too characteristic to be omitted. A Parisian bailiff dying in extreme poverty, some of his friends organised a subscription to defray the expenses of his interment; and one of them, who knew Dumas intimately, solicited a contribution. The novelist, without questioning the applicant as to the destination of the money, immediately gave him a louis; on which the other observed that the sum

collected would now be sufficient to ensure poor F—a decent burial. “Ah,” said Dumas, “is that what you want it for, to bury a bailiff? why didn’t you say so before? Take another louis while you are about it, and bury two.”

When his drama of Kean was produced at the Variétés, it was specially agreed between him and the manager, Dartois, that if the receipts of the first thirty performances should attain a total of sixty thousand francs, Dumas was to have two thousand for his share; but that if even a sou were wanting to complete the sum, he should receive nothing. As, however, the first twenty-nine nights had brought in no less than fifty-seven thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine francs, the dramatist felt tolerably sure of touching the promised “gratification,” and towards nine o’clock on the following evening strolled into the manager’s private room at the theatre, where to his infinite surprise and disappointment he learnt that between the actual totality of the receipts and the amount stipulated there was a difference not in his favour of seven francs. “Extremely sorry, my dear Dumas,” said Dartois, “but you know our agreement, and—”

“Not a word more,” interrupted the author of Kean; “it can’t be helped. Only,” he continued, “it rather inconveniences me just now, for I had counted on the two thousand francs, and not an hour ago lent a friend the last louis I had in my pocket.”

“Is that all?” said the manager, opening his cash-box; “take what you want.”

“Twenty francs will be quite enough,” replied Dumas, and, helping himself to the sum in question, strolled out of the room as leisurely as he had entered it. A quarter of an hour later, three more stalls had been taken, and the receipts of the thirty nights thereby raised to sixty thousand and five francs; the author’s ingenuity having hit upon the very original plan of securing his prime with the manager’s own money.

No one was readier with a repartee, or fonder of displaying his talent in that line. Coming one evening into the Théâtre Français with Latour de Saint-Ybars, the author of *Virginie*, one of whose tragedies was being performed, he observed an individual—evidently an old habitué—fast asleep in his stall. “Look there, Latour,” he whispered to his colleague; “that’s the effect of your poetry.” On the following night one of his own comedies happened to

be given, and arriving rather late at the theatre, he posted himself at the entrance of the stalls. Presently he felt a tap on his shoulder, and turning round beheld Latour, who pointed with his finger to one of the spectators in the front row, who was deep in the arms of Morpheus. “Look there,” he said with a malicious air of satisfaction; “that’s the effect of your prose!” “Bah!” retorted Dumas, “what a bad memory for faces you have! Don’t you recognise our friend of last night who has never awoke yet?”

Bouffé, in his amusing *Recollections*, relates his first and only interview with this prolific writer, the object of his visit being to induce Dumas to revise and contribute a third act to a drama, the subject of which was taken from one of the novelist’s own works. When the matter had been duly talked over and arranged, and the actor was on the point of taking leave of his host, the latter gaily remarked that the conversation they had had together would cost him a hundred francs. “That surprises you, no doubt,” he went on, “but it is a fact nevertheless, as you will presently see. I am writing a story in two volumes; the first is already in the printer’s hands, and the second, which I began yesterday, will be sent to him to-morrow. For the two I shall be paid four thousand francs, and as I can finish one in four-and-twenty hours, it is easy to calculate that every hour when I am not at work is a loss to me of a hundred francs. So, my good Bouffé, in future, when people tell you that Dumas is a careless fellow who doesn’t know how to look after his own interests, don’t believe them!”

During his last illness, his sick room was constantly invaded by a number of self-styled intimates, in reality hangers-on, in quest of a trifling loan, although their patron’s funds were then in anything but a flourishing condition; it being well known that he was always ready to assist when he could, and never turned a deaf ear to an appeal. He was lying one day prostrate on a sofa, when G——, the most persevering of these familiar leeches, entered the room; and, after a few preliminary enquiries as to the state of his health, contrived to let fall sundry hints as to his own embarrassed circumstances. Dumas, tolerably accustomed to this sort of thing, cut him short rather abruptly. “You want money,” he said; “I doubt if I have any, but you can look in the top drawer of the bureau, and perhaps you may find a stray coin or two.” The

other, profiting by the permission, at once set to work, and after methodically inspecting the contents of the drawer, triumphantly drew forth a piece of twenty francs, which had evidently been overlooked by previous searchers. "Tiens!" said Dumas with a touch of his old humour, "comme cela se trouve; they call me extravagant, and I defy anyone to be more economical. I came to Paris with two louis in my pocket, and you can bear witness that there is still one of them left!"

ROMEO AND JULIET.

THE origin of the story of Romeo and Juliet has been traced to the thirty-third novel of Massuccio di Salerno, written at Milan about four hundred years ago. Mariotto, a Sienese youth of good birth, is secretly married by a friar to Giannozza, a handsome young lady of the same city. Immediately afterwards, having killed a fellow-citizen in a street quarrel, he flies to Alexandria. Urged by her family to marry, Giannozza, at the instance of the friar aforesaid, sends herself into a trance by means of a powerful narcotic; and her friends, satisfied that she is dead, have her entombed with the usual rites. Mariotto returns to mourn over her remains, of course in disguise. Meanwhile, the ill-starred bride, resuscitated and released by the friar, sets out for Egypt to join her husband, though only to find that during her absence from Siena he has been recognised, seized, and executed. In the result she enters a convent in her native country, there to die of a broken heart.

Half a century later, when Massuccio and all his works were forgotten, this pathetic little tale was retold by Luigi da Porto with more striking effect. He shifted the scene to Verona, employed a feud between the Montecchi and the Cappelletti as an element in the plot, designated the lovers Romeo and Giuletta, and last, but not least, devised an entirely new catastrophe. Romeo swallows poison at what he believes to be his wife's grave; Giuletta recovers before he dies, and after an impressive scene between them she destroys herself. It has long been an article of faith on the other side of the Alps that Luigi's narrative was based upon truth. Even now, we believe, a tomb preserved in the garden of the Orfanotrofio is regarded by many as that of the heroine. But there can be little doubt that Romeo and Giuletta never

existed in real life. Luigi, so far from deriving his materials from a tradition of the picturesque old city, as has been suggested, simply recast Massuccio's novel in a new mould; and it probably occurred to him that by transferring the incidents to Verona he might at once blend them with the antagonism which had arisen two or three centuries previously between the Montagues and the Capulets—in itself a fertile source of interest to the Italians of his day—and provide the picture with a more romantic background than even Siena could afford.

The tragic fate of Romeo and Giuletta became a familiar story over the whole of western Europe, though not always in the same form. In 1553, at Lucca, Bandello brought out a novel on this eminently grateful theme. It was substantially a close imitation of Luigi's Giuletta, but attracted far greater attention than its model. Indeed, it may be said to have achieved an international reputation. Boastuau somewhat freely translated it into French for Belleforest's *Histoires Tragiques*. Arthur Brooke, a London poetaster, employed it as the basis of a metrical romance entitled *Romeus and Juliet*; containing a Rare Example of True Constancie, with the Subtill Counsels and Practices of an Old Fryer and their Ill Event. Here, oddly enough, the grand "effect" devised by Luigi is omitted, Juliet being kept in her trance until Romeo has breathed his last. "The true and constant love" of the pair for each other was next set forth in Paynter's *Palace of Pleasure*, a collection of ancient and modern fables in prose, and in two tragedies represented in London as the reign of Elizabeth drew to a close. In Spain, as in England, the subject was twice dealt with for the stage, first by Francisco de Roxas, who adhered to the original catastrophe in its integrity, and then by the too prolific Lope, who brought on the lovers under fresh names, relentlessly filled their cup of sorrow to the brim, and finally dismissed them to happiness here below.

The second in time-order of the two English plays we have referred to was Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, a poem from which, in the words of Schlegel, "all that is most intoxicating in the odour of a southern spring, all that is languishing in the song of the nightingale or voluptuous in the first opening of the rose, alike breathe forth." It is not improbable that the great dramatist composed this tragedy

as early as 1591, while he was yet in the freshness of youth. He twice speaks of the earthquake of 1580 as having occurred eleven years previously; and the inexperience shown by defects of the work in point of style—defects which, if they tend to interfere with the impression he creates, are at most a very little spot on a very lovely face—will strengthen the inference to be drawn from this fact. Be that as it may, *Romeo and Juliet*, after being “plaid publicly” by the “Lord Chamberlaine’s men” at the Curtain Theatre, was printed in 1597, and again, “newly corrected and augmented,” in 1599. Shakespeare was obviously indebted for his plot to the metrical romance; he adopted the new version of the catastrophe, and did not disdain to give a place in his dramatis personæ to a character introduced by Brooke. This was the garrulous old nurse, who likewise figured in an obscure drama by Luigi da Grotto on a corresponding series of incidents. *Mercutio*, on the other hand, is absolutely original; and Shakespeare is said to have declared that in sheer self-defence he was compelled to kill this brilliantly vivacious Veronese gentleman in the third act.

A novel theory in regard to the authorship of *Romeo and Juliet* may here be noticed. The Rev. Mr. Fleay, who has given his best energies to the study of Elizabethan literature, holds that the play is simply a revision by Shakespeare of one written by Peele. In support of his view we are reminded that a large portion of the quarto of 1597 is in Peele’s metre, that not one of the editions brought out during Shakespeare’s lifetime had his name on the title-page, and that if the first quarto is a surreptitious copy, made by a shorthand writer in the theatre, a theory more satisfactory than any yet propounded must be given to account for its errors being errors of eye and not of ear. In other words, if Mr. Fleay is right, the honour of inventing the tragedy must be ascribed to Peele, as in point of substance and general form the first quarto is not very dissimilar from its successors. At present, however, we have no reason to do anything of the kind. May not Shakespeare have been induced at the outset to adopt Peele’s metre? May he not have had some fanciful motive for bringing out the piece anonymously, especially as it might be taken to apply to the prevention of a marriage between Lord Southampton and Elizabeth Vernon? May not the first quarto have gone through

the press without his personal supervision? Above all—and this is a question which Mr. Fleay, perhaps with more shrewdness than candour, has altogether passed over—is there anything in Peele’s acknowledged plays, such as the rather turgid *Edward the First* and *David and Bethsaba*, to justify us in assuming that he had the smallest share in one characterised throughout by wealth of imagination, the finest sensibility, and an almost intuitive perception of the springs of human action?

Romeo and Juliet, like other tragedies from the same pen, was to suffer by the false taste which prevailed in this country from the Restoration down to the beginning of the present century. In 1662, according to Downes, it was altered by Dryden’s brother-in-law, James Howard, so as to end happily, and for some time was played alternately as a tragedy and a tragi-comedy. Eighteen years afterwards it was converted by Otway into a story of Roman life, *Caius Marius the younger* longing to be a glove upon the hand of *Lavinia Metella*. It is important to observe that the catastrophe here is similar to that invented by Luigi da Porto. The *History and Fall of Caius Marius*, as Otway’s piece was called, met with considerable success, thanks in great measure to the applicability of the dissensions between the *Marius* and *Sylla* parties to the factious bitterness of 1680. In 1744, *Romeo and Juliet*, then all but unknown to the playgoers, was restored to the stage by Theophilus Cibber, though in a sadly mutilated shape. Not to speak of other changes in the text, the scapegrace son of the author of *The Careless Husband* expunges all the references to *Romeo*’s love for *Rosaline*, and the last act is rearranged on the model of that of *Caius Marius*. Garrick, to whom the revival of Shakespeare’s fame is often ascribed, went a little further. In a new acting edition of the play, prepared in 1748, he borrowed the most important of Cibber’s innovations without acknowledgment, at the same time seeking to bolster them up by means of lines taken from Otway and other poets. Davies devoutly records his belief that the interpolations were made in a spirit not unworthy of Shakespeare! Garrick’s preface to the work is rather pleasant reading. His chief design in these alterations, he says, was “to clear the original as much as possible from the jingle and quibble which were always the objections to the reviving it.” *Rosaline* was left out “in compliance

to an opinion" that Romeo's inconstancy was a "blemish on his character." In regard to the catastrophe, the affecting circumstance of Juliet being made to wake before Romeo dies, a circumstance not known to Shakespeare, had been ineffectively treated by Otway, and Garrick reintroduced it in the hope that an "endeavour to supply the deficiency of so great a master would not be deemed arrogant." His version of Romeo and Juliet is barely less offensive than Davenant's *Macbeth* or Nahum Tate's *Lear*; yet, notwithstanding more than one attempt to displace it in favour of the original, it has kept possession of the stage to the present time.

The triumphs achieved by a few players in *Romeo and Juliet* were so fully described in these pages about two years ago* that we need not linger over them now. Spranger Barry, with his fine presence and chivalrous air, his musical voice and eloquent eyes, his well-painted ardour and sensibility, was an ideal lover in the earlier scenes, but did not excel towards the end. In both his merits and his shortcomings he presented a direct contrast to Garrick, who, comparatively unimpressive at the outset, seems to have set rivalry at defiance when the love-lorn youth is merged in the anguish-stricken husband. "Had I been Juliet to Garrick's Romeo," a lady remarked, "I should have expected him, so fiery was he in his passion, to jump up to me in the balcony. Barry was so tender and seductive that I should have jumped down to him." Garrick well remarked that it required an old head upon young shoulders to impersonate Romeo; but it is to be feared that the old head had too conspicuous a share in his performance. The season of 1750-1, in which Garrick and Barry opposed each other in this character, supported as Juliet by Mrs. Bellamy and Mrs. Cibber respectively, is one of the best-remembered periods in theatrical history, if only by reason of the epigram in the *Public Advertiser* on what was then deemed the too frequent appearance of the two actors in the same play:

"Well, what's to-night?" says angry Ned,
 As up from bed he rouses;
 "Romeo, again?" he shakes his head.
 "A plague o' both your houses."

Excellent as Cibber and Bellamy are reported to have been in Juliet, it may be doubted whether the character met with a generally satisfactory representative until,

in the year 1814, Miss O'Neill undertook it at Covent Garden. Her performance was a poem in action, aglow with southern warmth and grace and delicacy. Edmund Kean soon afterwards came forth as Romeo, and, without passing through the ordeal unscathed, did something to raise his already splendid reputation. In the words of Hazlitt, "his performance had nothing of the lover in it. He was neither ardent nor voluptuous. In the balcony scene he stood like a statue of lead." Nevertheless, there were high merits in the essay. "In the midst of the extravagant and irresistible expression of Romeo's grief at being banished from the object of his love," continues the same critic, "his voice suddenly stops, and falters, and is choked with sobs of tenderness when he comes to Juliet's name. Those persons must be made of stronger stuff than ourselves who are proof against Mr. Kean's acting in both this scene and the dying convulsion at the close. His repetition of the word 'banished' shows that he treads close indeed upon the genius of Shakespeare." Helen Faucit and Adelaide Neilson successively found in Juliet a means of adding a flower to their chaplets; but of late years, as a rule, the character of Romeo, which from a theatrical point of view is hardly, if at all, inferior to that of Juliet, has been treated as of secondary importance, has been assigned to young actors who have no requisite for the part save a good appearance, a little self-possession, and a tolerable comprehension of the speeches they have to deliver.

The latest revival of this beautiful tragedy—a revival which is generally a triumph of taste and judgment—may be expected to have some important results. Mr. Irving, like the Warwick of old, may boast that his "favourite reigns;" and it has been reserved for him to prove that *Romeo and Juliet*, if not altogether worthy of being ranked with *Lear* and *Othello*, is a greater work of art, especially from a stage point of view, than the world at large has hitherto supposed. In the next place, he has had the courage to dispense with Garrick's handiwork, which in all probability will now lose its hold upon the affections of any actor deserving of the name. Whatever may be thought of the dramatic value of Luigi da Porto's catastrophe, it is certain that the tomb scene in Shakespeare is more impressive as it stands than any change by a dramatist of inferior power could make it, and the

* ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, Vol. 24, p. 42, "Romeo and Juliet."

significance, as an illustration of character, of the hero's fleeting attachment to Rosalind, has become widely recognised. Lastly, Mr. Irving's Romeo is likely to restore the balance between the chief personages in the play. Not that his performance is wholly satisfactory. In the atmosphere of essentially youthful passion he is clearly out of his element. His tones, his movements, his peculiar style, all this is not in perfect harmony with the spirit of such scenes as that under Juliet's balcony. But as the shadows of the piece deepen, he leaves little or no room for adverse criticism. He again proves a truly great actor. His banishment and death scenes must be classed with the proudest achievements of the stage. If he fails where Garrick and Edmund Kean failed—and this is beyond doubt—he at least triumphs where they triumphed, and Romeo once more divides the interest of the play in about an equal degree with the heroine. It is no poor testimony to Mr. Irving's gifts that he should have accomplished this by the side of such an actress as Miss Terry, who, though unequal in point of physique to the requirements of the fourth act, has already associated her name with the character of Juliet by reason of the supreme tenderness and pathos which mark her impersonation. Every character in the piece, however small it may be, is carefully represented; and mediæval Verona, "with the crescent of her eastern cliffs, whence the full moon used to rise through the burs of the cypresses in her burning summer twilights, touching with soft increase of silver light the rosy marbles of her balconies," is set before us in the course of the performance with almost startling truth.

THE NEW STREET.

TURNING a corner, a corner occupied by a quiet-looking tavern, you come upon the new street, marked out by lines of houses in various stages of construction—the roadway occupied by a huge mortar pie, and big piles of bricks, with depths of mud between, in which carts loaded with bricks, with joists of timber, with fire-places and iron railings, with rolls of lead and rows of slates, are sticking fast at intervals. Not a pretentious street by any means, but of smart and cheerful aspect, with little houses all of the same pattern, but not a bad pattern at that. Some few are quite finished, aye, and fur-

nished, as far as neat lace curtains go, with a little table in the window to hold the family Bible, or photographic album, or wax flowers under a shade, or perhaps a stuffed kitten. Other houses again are counted as finished, with shavings lying about, and dabs of plaster, and the walls still unpapered, and yet with a van waiting outside loaded with furniture, while women and children are running in and out, carrying baskets and light things, a half-hundred of coal, perhaps, in a packing-case, or a kitchen-fender. One or two of the dwellings, still further from completeness, have bills in the window which had once denoted, "To let," but which now, with the "to" amputated, proclaim triumphantly that it is no good to apply within.

Altogether it was evident that the new street was a success, and that as soon as the houses were ready, and sooner, there were tenants waiting to take them; a broad contrast to other streets not far away, where family mansions and middle-class dwellings seemed rather a drug in the market. But one house there was, not half finished yet, that had a full-grown bill in the window—"To let, enquire within."

Enquire within! when there was no within, or only a rudimentary within-ness, and one had to step gingerly from rafter to rafter, while fragments of plaster dropped through the skeleton flooring overhead. But there was a sound of hammering further on, and so I pushed forward from the elementary scene within, to the outer world at the back. It was a nice bright day, with the sunshine warm and genial. All about were bricklayers laying out walls which were to form the backyards of the future, while the smell of mortar and the tinkling of trowels formed a pleasant accompaniment to the general hum of labour.

"If you want to know about them houses, there's the gaffer as they belongs to," spoke a passing hodsman, pointing to a man some way up a ladder, who was hammering away at the outer casing of a cistern.

"Twelve shillings," rap tap, "a week," tap tap, "and no taxes," with a triumphant shower of raps on a succession of stubborn nail-heads.

Thus said the gaffer from his ladder, a stout ruddy-faced man, all aglow with the warmth of the sun and of his own exertions. The tone of his voice might be affected by the reserve supply of nails that

he kept in his mouth, but there was no cordiality to be detected in it. Still that last utterance was a pleasing one—no taxes. Does any such blessed spot exist where there are no taxes, and of that spot am I the happy discoverer?

"Will you let me a house?" I cry to the man up the ladder, who is still hammering away, while the trowels chink, and the warm fume of the mortar rises in the air.

The gaffer stops hammering, he seems to have emptied his mouth of the nails, and descends the ladder.

"You're thinking about one of them 'ouses," he says doubtfully. "Well, I might let you have one in about six weeks or two months."

"But that won't do at all for me. I want a house that I can get into to-morrow morning."

The builder scratches his head thoughtfully, and chinks the coin, or perhaps the keys, or maybe the nails, in his pocket, but says nothing. Now couldn't he find a house for a careful tenant, who would pay a month's rent in advance down on the nail to clench the bargain—turning the money over carelessly in one's palm. The builder's eye brightens.

"Well now, there's a little house, but I've promised it, only the party was to have been here at half after eleven to settle about it, and now——" Well yes, now the hour of noon was sounding, the tinkle of trowels had ceased, and the men were straightening themselves up, and cleaning their tools ready to knock off work for dinner. And as the faithless man hadn't come—only more probably it was a woman—well, Mr. Rubbles didn't mind letting me have that little house, and forthwith handed me the key in exchange for that trifle in currency, and then took to his ladder again, with a fresh supply of nails; for a man who works for himself is not so nice as others about his dinner hour.

"And is there no agreement to sign?"

The man smiles a pitying smile.

"Bless you, there's never no agreements about weekly 'ouses."

Now, coming to think of agents and agreements, of fixtures and of valuations, of quarter-day and kindred annoyances, of poor rate, local board, water, gas, and all those others who on the maternal side claim kindred with the horse-leech, and the experience and dread of which and whom have kept this humble chronicler more or less of a vagabond, while all is now

wrapped up for me in this symmetrical twelve shillings a week—thinking of all this, my heart is glad within me; and the house is really a very neat little house, adorned even with encaustic tiles and pillars of sculptured stone, with a garden-plot in front, some twelve feet by four—just the size of garden to cultivate with one's own hands. But hardly have I surveyed the advantages of the new house, and shown my face in the bay-window of the sitting-room, than I am disturbed by continual applications at the door-knocker. "'Appy to supply you with milk—good country milk. We keep our own cows; come and see 'em milked. Fine country butter and new-laid eggs." Indeed, the street is now studded all over with milk-sellers. To say nothing of the people with pony-carts, there are numbers of wandering milkmen who skirmish around with cans in their hands, and a mixed race who drive perambulators, in which the baby is represented by two fat milk-cans. One Binks, a perambulator man, engages our assent to calling next day, but his rival, Skimmidge, with a smart pony, wins our heart by his bonhomie and his big black dog, who retrieves milk-cans with as much gusto as his country cousin would bring in a wounded pheasant. Skimmidge is evidently the popular man in our street; he has such a happy manner with the ladies, and then he has cows of his own, he observes, "out in the country." But we have agreed with Binks. Clearly it won't do to throw him over. Even Skimmidge admits that. There is honour among milkmen.

Next come the bakers, as persistent, but more cautious, in their advances. The baker would evidently like to have a character with you from your last place, and is drawn in opposite directions by his fear of losing a good customer or acquiring a bad one. Soon Rubbles, the builder, our new landlord, comes in. The water has not yet been laid on, which is his affair, thank goodness. But in the meantime there is a supply from the pipe opposite, where a little steam-engine is at work, grinding up lime and sand into mortar. But the beer supply is in full going order. A man goes about with a big can charged with four-ale, of which the bricklayers take a refresher every hour or so, with occasional extras; and he is festooned with smaller cans of the various "taps" and their combinations. And then for a week or more the whole scene fades into the

background, till one morning we make an appearance, the whole family, with bag and baggage. Binks is on the look-out for us, with the day's supply of milk in an oval can with a brass hook to it, to hang it to the railings, while Skimmidge watches him from his pony-cart with ill-disguised jealousy.

"He ain't got no cows," observes Binks with a decided scowl at his rival, "only a plaster one. He goes to the fountain 'ead for his supply."

Once settled, we have leisure to observe our neighbours, and even to make their acquaintance, this last process being facilitated by the open nature of the rudimentary back-yards. On one side a hard-working matron is hanging out clothes; on the other a thick-set young man in a travelling-cap, who suggests the engineer of a steamer, is trying to make a border along one side of the compound, and striking out sparks with his spade from the stones and brickbats which form the upper crust of this part of the earth's surface.

"There's soil underneath somewhere," says the young man in a hoarse mysterious undertone. "Why, there were potatoes growing here last year at this time."

And, indeed, the green haulm of a potato, thrusting itself forth among broken bricks and cinders, testified to the correctness of the young man's assertion. Not that he aspires to potatoes. If he can get a few scarlet-runners, to climb up the wall and give an aspect of greenness to the scene, he will be quite satisfied. A thin and pale youth, who turns out to be the husband of the hard-working matron—who would make two of him—and the father of a considerable family, is at work on the other side, building up, with the assistance of a lodger, a combined fowl-house and rabbit-hutch from the fragments of old egg-boxes.

"Don't you reckon upon your kidney-beans, my friend; if they'd grow, which they won't, why them young imps from Buttercup Gardens will root 'em all up."

Ah, those Buttercup Gardens! we of the new street regard their inhabitants as white settlers may regard the Zulus or the Kaffirs. The "Gardens" are an old street—very old, thirty years old at the least—and the houses may have been smart cottages once with roses climbing about them, but are now battered and worn and sodden, swarm-

ing with life and yet hopelessly dull and dejected. There are big gardens behind them, however, devoted mostly to old hats, and broken shoes, and rusty meat cans, but redeemed here and there by some bright spring growth, a row of scarlet-runners or a graceful birch clothed in delicate greenery. Here and there, too, a laundress has established herself, and the garden space is festooned with delicate draperies, while tall well-grown girls, clean and fresh-looking amid the general dinginess, peg out with swift dexterous hands the damp clinging garments from their baskets. At most of the windows—windows broken and patched with paper and rags—craftsmen sit at their work; the slop tailor shaking with his perpetual cough, the cobbler stitching away for dear life, the tinman red-eyed over the fumes of his soldering-pot, a carpenter who seems to make nothing but frames of one particular size; then there is the sempstress bending pale and weary over her seam, and women and girls, too, making paper boxes, with others of various occupations.

There is one man who seems like the seigneur of the district. He has his house to himself, and his garden with a border of flowers and rows of cabbages, his pigeon-cote, and his poultry-yard, while he lounges about in his hareskin cap and rough but comfortable suit of moleskin, with a pipe always in his mouth and beer at command. And to him the popular voice attributes a sinister reputation. He has a horse and cart of his own, and assumes the character of a furniture-broker, but he is believed to be more in the housebreaking line, and has even, so runs the thrilling legend, been under suspicion for murder.

From the sordid houses of Buttercup Gardens issue swarms of children; the boys forming themselves into daring bands, who clatter along the tops of the walls, and make forays on the neighbouring gardens. They have a keen scent for an empty house, and a vivid delight in smashing all its windows; they revel in half-finished buildings, and if left to themselves would pull them to pieces stick by stick. But it must be said for them that they have faint notions of local attachment, and rarely make descents upon their immediate neighbours, while a very small amount of kindness will secure fervent partisans among these wild and wandering tribes.

Now the girls are much more susceptible of civilisation and a certain polish. To wear a fringe over the eyes and a tail of hair behind, to dress in Pompadour cottons and a smart hat comes natural to the female mind, and these things are incompatible with raids over the garden-wall.

But enough of Buttercup Gardens, which are rather beneath the dignity of our new street, among whose inhabitants we count such dignitaries as an inspector of police and a railway superintendent. Every day the piles of bricks are being spun into houses. There is a wonderful man with a saw, who comes at odd times and puts together the flooring of a room in a spare five minutes. The doors and windows come ready made in carts, and even the staircases all put together. It is like putting together so many toy-houses, and every day almost sees the completion of a castle in miniature and the arrival of its garrison, also a good deal in miniature, children riding joyously on the boxes or perched on the footboard of the greengrocer's cart, piled high with battered furniture. In this continual ingress divers currents mingle, and the new street is confronted with two different destinies. Either it will become the home of the clerk, of the minor official world, of the police and railways, of the assistant school-master and the pupil-teacher, or it will assume the character of a regular workman's street, with two or three families in each house, and single lodgers filling up vacant spaces.

As the street fills up the rush of purveyors of necessaries becomes less intense. The weakest of these have died out and the fittest survive, and among these, of course, Skimmidge and the smart little pony. And Skimmidge, after all, secured our custom from the second day of our settlement in the new street. For when breakfast-time came there was no milk. The faithless Binks had betrayed us, his can was nowhere about the premises. But Skimmidge was still in the neighbourhood. He shakes his head sadly when he hears of the defalcation of Binks. "But what can you expect from those little men? They've got no regular supply." Skimmidge happily can spare a little, and henceforth is to be the regular purveyor, vice the defaulter Binks. But in the middle of the day Binks makes his appearance, not penitent, but wrathful and indignant. Half of his customers have

missed their supply, while the cans which he left at their doors have been found in an empty house. That miscreant Skimmidge is at the bottom of it, and there is a promise of mischief when the two men meet. But next morning Skimmidge turns up smiling, although painfully, with a swollen cheek and a black eye. Binks and he had met, it afterwards transpired, and settled their differences, and the result is understood to be that Binks has definitely abandoned his claims to the new road, and we and others are the spoil of the victor.

And when the last pile of bricks has disappeared and the last thirsty brick-layer has carried his plummet and trowel to another new street, ours assumes quite a pleasant and cheerful aspect. The roadway, not yet open for traffic, becomes the playground of the children. The female population seem to spend their time in the doorways, taking the air and exchanging experiences of life. In the day time, indeed, there is hardly a man to be seen, reminding one of certain islands in the Indian Ocean, described by Arab travellers, where women were the only permanent inhabitants. Not that the female population here shows much Amazonian enterprise or vigour. They seem content with the somewhat listless loitering life allotted to them in the great scheme of nature. But on Saturday the listless quiet and peace of the week is exchanged for life and bustle. Windows are rubbed bright and rooms cleaned out, and as the hour strikes for the return of the men, with their wages in their pockets, the street is well filled with the itinerant dealers of the period. All the rest of the week there is credit; but the debtor who fails to pay up on Saturday is looked upon as in the fair way to the county court. And besides the greengrocer, with his loud cries, and the oilman, who dabbles also in groceries, equally resonant, there are numbers of smart persistent men who knock at everybody's door; bland and insinuating to those who have kept out of their books, stern and peremptory to others who lag in their payments. You may get credit for anything for a week, and there is hardly anything within the scope of a working-man's desires which may not be bought and paid for in weekly payments. A pier-glass, a sewing-machine, an accordion, a patent mangle, Matthew Henry's Commentaries and Fox's Book of Martyrs, these are a few of the articles offered in a single day to a house-

holder in our street. A pretentious rap at the door announces a man who enquires if the master of the house has taken out a life policy, or if you would not like to take out a small assurance on the children, "say twopence a week a head, which surely won't hurt you." Night draws on before the general hubbub has ceased, and far into the night you may hear the frenzied cries of the traders at their stalls in neighbouring streets. "Wrong way up, wrong way up!" so they seem to say. "This way, ladies, here you are, my dears." Happily with us Saturday night is not the time for domestic quarrels. The men are mellow and affectionate, and the women, their marketing all done, and the Sunday garments redeemed from the pawnbroker's clutches, enjoy a space of happiness and well-being.

Sunday morning too is intensely quiet. Till about nine o'clock, when the Sunday papers are brought round, not a soul is to be seen, not a blind is drawn up. By noon, however, the men are lounging in the back gardens, which, now that the street is thoroughly settled, have assumed a strangely varied appearance, as rabbit-hutches, fowl-houses, pigeon-cotes, in all manner of forms and shapes, crowd the little available space. Cats are not popular in the neighbourhood, and mostly die young. Nor are dogs at all common. The reputed burglar in Buttercup Gardens has one, of course—not a bulldog, as you might think, but a little toy-terrier with prominent glassy eyes. The Gardens turn out in full force on the occasion of a fine Sunday morning, but there is a listless dejected look about most of the men, and as one o'clock approaches the gardens are deserted for the street, where our friends form part of a queue of people waiting for the opening of the accustomed public-house.

But Monday is the most trying day in our street, the most prolific in domestic quarrels. Then comes the sour reaction of over stimulation, with the unpleasant prospect of work—wages all spent, and the mind vaguely dissatisfied with self and everybody else. And to the still small voice is added the voice neither still nor small of a discontented wife. I think the man would stand it better if there were more life and variety in her reproaches. It is the terrible iteration that robs the bemused helpmate of his last shred of patience. "You're a pretty man; you call yourself a man—a man, you a man!" and so on, till

the altercation ends in piercing screams of murder and a rush into the street on the part of the woman; while the terrified children fly, half-naked from their beds, and join their shrieks to hers.

On Monday morning Mrs. Adze has frequently a black eye, but otherwise matters wear their usual aspect. At work and in his sober senses Jack Adze dimly remembers that he made rather a fool of himself the night before; and yet perhaps some sense of the thin line that separated that scene from one of awful tragedy keeps him on his good behaviour for a week or two.

All this while our relations with Rubbles, our landlord, have been of the most simple and satisfactory character. Rubbles calls every Monday morning. He pockets his rent, and instead of showing himself callous or indifferent like ordinary landlords to suggested improvements, or retorting that such a thing is the tenant's business, he is always willing to do what a builder can, to put his head into our cistern to look after the water-pipes, and do any small repairs out of hand. But a change came over Rubbles at last. No one so bright and stirring as he as long as things went only pretty well. When affairs began to go better than well Rubbles fêted them too freely, and fell into the background. One day there was a regular congress of builders at the corner of our street, just as you may have seen a lot of crows assembled over some knotty point. They came from all parts of the compass, nearly all in little pony-gigs with smart little ponies. Some say this was a kind of *vehm-gericht* at which the fate of Rubbles was decided. Anyhow from that moment his affairs tumbled into confusion. And then it turned out that there was a hitch in that simple and beautiful plan of paying everything in one weekly sum. For Rubbles had shirked that part of the contract which implied that he was to pay the taxes, and presently there appeared men with implements ready to cut off the water in arrears, while collectors of different imposts hung about continually and loudly threatened distraint. To crown all the superior landlord put in a claim for a year's ground rent. All these things could be fought through, but the fighting disturbed the idyllic calm we had looked for in our retreat. The time had clearly come for our departure to other scenes, and so we presently took leave of the new street.

DAFFODIL.

CHAPTER XIII. MOAT CASTLE.

LADY BESS did not give Laurence's message to his ward. Had Daffodil's engagement been an accomplished fact she would have done so, but at present she deemed it wiser to refrain from even mentioning his name. A certain radiant look which was sure to come into the girl's eyes when he was spoken of, offended her. Such blissful lights ought to burn for Lord Castlemoat alone.

On the day after Laurence's visit to town the party set out for Moat Castle, Daffodil rather glad that the season was over, and looking forward beyond the pleasant sojourn at her friend's castle to the happy day that should see her back once more at the farm. Since Mr. Dartfield had not been able to come to see her triumphs in London then, he must be doubly glad of her return to the country. She had a lurking joyous suspicion that Laurence was a little jealous of all her new admirers, but that, as a good guardian, he was giving her every opportunity of making an unfettered choice.

How sweet to go back out of the glamour of fashionable life; to slip into her old cambric frocks again; and roam the fields with Mr. Dartfield! Then he should see how unchanged and unspoiled she was, how thoroughly persuaded that there was no one in all the world to be compared with the friend she had loved, and been beloved by, since her babyhood.

Thinking these thoughts she stood at her window one early morning, in a rapture of happiness, looking out over the park, enjoying all that beauty of Lord Castlemoat's possessions which had completely captivated her imagination, and counting the few days that must yet intervene before she could go "home." She had had a week of pleasure of a most novel kind; had explored all the old nooks and crannies of this ancient castle; fallen into ecstasies over old panelled rooms, ghostly bed-chambers, solemn picture-gallery, and secret staircase.

Again and again she had told Lord Castlemoat that he was happy, happy in the possession of so much that was delightful. The more spiteful of the guests had shrugged their shoulders and said that the young beauty was making her desire to be mistress of Moat Castle rather unnecessarily apparent; and they had been led to conclude in consequence,

that Lord Castlemoat had not yet made his proposal.

In the latter supposition they were certainly right. Up to this time he had been unable to break through the barrier raised by her candour, unconsciousness, and entire friendliness towards himself.

A knock came to the door and a letter was handed to her. One joyful glance at the handwriting, and the envelope was torn, and the sheet spread on the window-sill, while the young head bent over it, supported on both hands. But—what was the meaning of this unusually solemn beginning? Was this epistle going to be a scolding that it should open by reminding her in such a patriarchal way of his deep interest in her welfare? What could she have done? thought Daffodil swiftly. Nothing; but to wait patiently on his pleasure! vehemently answered the passionate heart.

Mr. Dartfield went on to say that Lady Bess having told him of Daffodil's engagement to Lord Castlemoat, he had at first thought it right to wait to be informed of the fact by herself before writing to congratulate her; but on reflection he had changed his mind, especially as no information had been given in her last letter. He had begun to fear that having learned that he was aware of her engagement, she felt hurt at his making no allusion to it. Therefore he now spoke. He congratulated her warmly, and hoped she would write to him freely on the subject.

It was just such a letter as a father or a brother might have written in a similar case.

Daffodil, all her roses flown, pale as a lily, stared at the letter with tearful angry eyes. How dare Lady Bess make such cruel mischief? She engaged to Lord Castlemoat! Her friend, old enough to be her father! (He was the same age as Laurence.) Oh, how could he bring himself to write so hateful a letter? Did he care so little then, thinking such wicked gossip true? Down came her tears in a thunder-shower. He would give her to that civil lord, to be shut up in this dungeon of an old castle—how charming it was but a minute ago!—and deliver her over for ever with a few kindly fatherly sentences like these. She tore the letter in a hundred pieces, the first of Laurence's that had ever been so treated, and then she wept plentifully again.

At last her passion exhausted itself, the clouds cleared away, and from the window

she saw the sun still shining, flowers still blooming. A new light broke through her storm. In spite of all this strange misunderstanding she knew by inspiration that Laurence loved her. He had loved her well, had always loved her, and she knew that he loved her still. So ran the happy litany of loving, that her heart in its recovered contentment sang over and over again unto itself. Lady Bess had been making mischief through a well-meaning ignorance, and Laurence was acting nobly in his capacity of guardian of her dead father's child. She had now got a clue to all his recent conduct; to his persistent refusal to come to London all these weeks.

As glad, as triumphant, as half an hour ago she had been woe-begone and angry, she sat down to answer and undeceive Mr. Dartfield.

"It is quite untrue," she wrote, "I am not, and shall never be, engaged to Lord Castlemoat. I am tired of all this excitement and only longing to go home."

Here the ready tears came down in another tempest, and, strive as she would after that, she could find no more words to put into her note. Crude and unfinished as it was, it must go.

Having removed the traces of her storm she went to place her letter in the letter-bag, unwilling to trust it to any but her own eager hands. This done she breathed more freely, and turned into the conservatory to refresh her smarting eyes with the freshness of the flowers. And there as chance would have it was Lord Castlemoat alone.

He was bending over some delicate blossoms, and, looking up at the sound of a light footstep, he saw the subject of his thoughts approaching through the spreading palms and ferns. As she appeared he was struck, not for the first time, with her likeness to the gladsome flower after which she was named. The straight lithe form clad in pale green, and crowned with its wreath of fluttering yellow hair, reminded him of the daffodil that springs up suddenly in the glades with promise of hope and light for coming days. As he watched her tripping along she looked up, and, seeing his eye fixed on her with supreme admiration, a sudden trouble came down upon her. An unlucky recollection of what had been written to Mr. Dartfield flashed into her mind: he paused startled, and coloured vividly and painfully all over her face.

Annoyed and amazed at her own em-

barrassment she stood for a second in consternation at this unexpected consequence of Lady Bess's meddling. What could Lord Castlemoat think of her? But quickly banishing the shamefaced feeling for which she knew she had no real cause, she gradually regained her composure.

To his lordship her blush and startled glance appeared the signal for which he was waiting to speak. Charmed to see her distress he instantly concluded that, taken unawares, she had betrayed at last a consciousness which until now she had cleverly concealed. He advanced to meet her with a triumphant step, and taking her by the hand led her to a retired spot to look at some specially beautiful plant. The flower, however, that most engaged his eyes was, all the time, the rose that still glowed in her own cheek. In a few moments he had put her in possession of his hopes and expectations, had gently, courteously, and perhaps a little condescendingly explained to her that he wished her to become his wife, and the lady of Moat Castle.

Pausing for a reply he observed with delight her troubled eyes and vivid flushes. But the Laird o' Cockpen himself was not more disappointed, when the lady of his choice made him her curtsy, than was our noble wooer as Daffodil faltered slowly:

"I am very sorry—that you should think—of such an extraordinary thing."

Lord Castlemoat dropped her hand and turned aside to hide his surprise and chagrin; but quickly recovering his good-humour, he said to himself that he had taken her too suddenly. She had not, perhaps, had time to be sure of her own feelings. He liked her the better for not being too eager to accept his offer.

"Pardon me," he said, "if I have been too abrupt. Let us say no more at present on the subject. Only think of what I have said. Let me try to gain your heart."

"You cannot," said Daffodil shyly, but decidedly.

"Let me try," he persisted. "I love you, and love often succeeds in winning love. I could give you a great deal that you know how to enjoy. I could make you very happy."

Daffodil reflected for a moment.

"You are very good and generous," she said, "and it would not be honest of me to leave you under a mistake."

Lord Castlemoat was startled by something in her tone.

"There can be only one reason," he said, "why I ought not to hope. May I ask if

your heart has been already given to another?"

"Yes," said Daffodil simply.

It was Lord Castlemoat's turn to flush, and he stared at her in utter surprise. She was quite pale now, and stood looking at him through tears. Hastily he thought of each of her admirers in turn. He had seen her favour none. She appeared to him in a new light, and, piqued, vexed, and astonished, he instantly prepared to withdraw.

"Thank you," he said coldly. "It was hardly fair to ask you such a question. Of course I have now no more to say."

"Forgive me," said the young girl, holding out her hand. "I fear I may have seemed to behave badly. I did not suspect——"

His lordship smiled faintly and constrainedly. He found it difficult to believe in her simplicity.

"Do not trouble yourself about me," he said. "Men have to get over these things, and I feel that I am indebted to you for your frankness. I hope we remain good friends; and permit me to escort you to the drawing-room."

Daffodil suddenly remembered poor Giles's burst of grief, and contrasted it with the self-possession politeness of her present rejected suitor. Feeling herself humbled and abashed at this second awkward blunder, she declined his lordship's escort and made her escape.

She went to look for Lady Bess, and found her alone.

"Well, my dear, what is the matter?" asked the elder lady caressingly, seeing the marks of agitation on her face, and concluding that the wished-for moment had come—that Lord Castlemoat had proposed.

"Lady Bess, something has happened. We must leave this place as soon as possible."

"What do you mean?"

"You will hardly believe it, but Lord Castlemoat has asked me to marry him."

"Well? You do not mean to tell me you have refused him?"

"Oh yes—indeed, I have."

"Fool!" cried Lady Bess, springing from her seat, and turning a look of disgust and anger on the astonished girl.

"Lady Bess!" cried Daffodil, aghast, "surely this is a matter altogether for myself."

Lady Bess continued to gaze at her for some seconds in a state of silent exaspera-

tion, struggling with a disappointment which deprived her of her presence of mind. Making a great effort she controlled herself.

"Pardon me for speaking hastily," she said in a voice still trembling with anger, "but I cannot believe that you have refused such an offer. Handsome, agreeable, wealthy, and a nobleman; you must certainly have lost your senses!"

"Surely it is my own affair," persisted Daffodil with head erect.

"It is my affair too," persisted Lady Bess. "Why, do you suppose, did I bring you to London, and afford you such opportunities, if not that you might make such a marriage as this which you tell me you have rejected?"

"I did not know," said Daffodil. "I did not come to London with any such expectations."

Lady Bess looked at her and struggled hard to regain her temper. Perhaps all might not be lost. The girl standing there with her innocent eyes and obstinate mouth was evidently such a child as yet, so unawakened to the realities of life, that perhaps a little amiability and adroitness on her own part might put everything right in the end. She turned away and mused a few moments, and then, suddenly looking up, flashed upon Daffodil one of her most radiant and bewitching smiles.

"Come, you little simpleton!" she said, holding out her hand, "don't let us quarrel about such folly. I see you are but a baby after all. I suppose I must forgive you and leave this pleasant place; though it is very provoking of you to be such a spoilsport."

The next day they departed from Moat Castle, and immediately after her arrival at home Lady Bess wrote to Lord Castlemoat. It was a short letter, yet the composition occupied her a considerable time. She considered it a masterpiece of skill, conveying as it did, in the most delicate manner, her conviction that Daffodil had refused him merely through shyness and a childish unwillingness to think about marriage at all, and hinting that, with a little perseverance he might win her if he chose.

All through the day after the despatch of this letter Lady Bess was amiable and affectionate to Daffodil. But by return of post came the looked-for answer from Lord Castlemoat.

The two ladies were spending the evening quietly together, Lady Bess thinking it

more seemly after what had occurred that there should be a break in the round of their amusements, thus showing a proper sense of her appreciation of the magnitude of Daffodil's mistake. Arrangements for a move to the sea-side were suspended. The noble suitor should have an opportunity of visiting them once more before their departure from town.

Daffodil had gone to her own room to fetch some silks for her embroidery, leaving her friend half asleep in the comfortable recesses of a couch. On her return to the drawing-room she found Lady Bess standing erect, holding a letter in her hand, with quivering nostrils and frowning eyes.

"Daffodil!" she cried in high shrill tones, "come and tell me if it is true what I find written here. This is a letter from Lord Castlemoat. Can it be possible that you informed him that your affections were already engaged to another man?"

The girl had paused, breathless with astonishment, in the middle of the room. Her answer came clear and firm.

"Yes, Lady Bess, it is true."

"Heaven grant me patience!" cried Lady Bess. "She says 'yes' as coolly as if it were a matter of custom for young girls to make such audacious avowals."

"I am quite at a loss to understand the cause of your anger," said Daffodil, shrinking but brave. "What passed between me and Lord Castlemoat ought to have been sacred. I said nothing to him but what I was bound in honour to say."

"Really, young lady, I admire your candour. A girl of nineteen has no hesitation in declaring herself in love with—Heaven knows whom! And pray, most honourable maiden, who is the happy individual who has successfully rivalled Lord Castlemoat?"

"That I am not bound to tell," said Daffodil tremulously.

"Indeed. A nice position surely. So you have bestowed your affections on a man whose name you are ashamed to mention!"

"Ashamed?" cried Daffodil, and her voice rang like a bell through the room. "Is there anything to be ashamed of about Laurence Dartfield?"

Lady Bess sank into a chair, as if struck down by a blow.

"Laurence Dartfield! In love with Laurence Dartfield! A man who never thought of you but as a troublesome child. A man who——"

"Loves me!" cried the girl with a happy laugh, "I know it. He has loved me since I was a child. He will love me for ever."

"Has he asked you to be his wife?" said Lady Bess sternly.

"Oh no; I am not anxious to be married yet," said Daffodil.

"I can only say," said Lady Bess, "that you are the most disgraceful girl I ever heard of. I——"

"Stop!" cried Daffodil, her cheeks in a flame. "I cannot listen to such words, even from you. Of what have I to be ashamed? In what have I disgraced myself? You have cross-questioned me in a most unwomanly manner, and I have answered you the truth. Now I will go away, Lady Bess. I am thankful to you for your former kindness, but I cannot stay any longer in your house. Good-bye!"

As Daffodil fled from the room, Lady Bess rose and paced the floor, giving way to a frenzy of rage. Reason told her that Daffodil was speaking truth in saying that Laurence loved her, and the girl's happy boldness and confidence overwhelmed the woman who had hoped to outwile and outwit her. Lady Bess had counted on a young girl's shyness and reserve as an assistance to her own mischief-making, but this audacious candour had checked her. So absorbed was she in her own disappointment and anger that she paid little heed to Daffodil's threat of leaving her at once.

Late at night, having weathered the storm of her own passion, she looked round and considered what fragments might be left from the wreck of her plans. She resolved to make up the quarrel with the girl to-morrow, and induce her to accompany her in a sojourn abroad. She would carry her off to Italy, without having given her time for a meeting with Laurence. When there, fresh plans must be made in a last desperate effort to keep the two apart.

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In Seven Years ending	New Policies Issued.	Amount of New Assurances.	Funds at end of each Period.
31st Dec. 1845—(8 years)	2,136	£942,899	£69,009
" 1852 . .	3,762	1,628,429	254,675
" 1859 . .	4,357	2,018,972	633,514
" 1866 . .	6,084	2,935,073	1,245,372
" 1873 . .	9,270	4,772,072	2,253,175
" 1880 . .	13,245	7,459,742	3,913,252

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		Twenty-one Payments.	Fourteen Payments.	Seven Payments.		
21	£1 16 3	£2 10 6	£3 4 11	£5 10 0	£33 0 1	21
22	1 16 9	2 11 0	3 5 9	5 11 0	33 5 10	22
23	1 17 2	2 11 6	3 6 5	5 12 1	33 11 2	23
24	1 17 7	2 12 1	3 6 11	5 13 1	33 16 5	24
25	1 18 0	2 12 6	3 7 3	5 14 0	34 2 0	25
26	1 18 6	2 13 0	3 7 10	5 14 11	34 8 2	26
27	1 19 2	2 13 6	3 8 7	5 15 11	34 16 1	27
28	1 19 11	2 14 1	3 9 5	5 17 1	35 4 9	28
29	2 0 8	2 14 8	3 10 3	5 18 6	35 14 1	29
*30	2 1 6	2 15 4	3 11 2	6 0 1	36 4 0	*30
31	2 2 6	2 16 2	3 12 1	6 1 10	36 14 6	31
32	2 3 5	2 17 1	3 13 2	6 3 8	37 5 5	32
33	2 4 6	2 18 0	3 14 4	6 5 8	37 17 2	33
34	2 5 7	2 19 0	3 15 7	6 7 9	38 9 7	34
35	2 6 10	3 0 2	3 16 11	6 10 0	39 2 9	35
36	2 8 2	3 1 5	3 18 4	6 12 5	39 16 11	36
37	2 9 8	3 2 9	3 19 11	6 15 0	40 12 4	37
38	2 11 3	3 4 3	4 1 7	6 17 9	41 8 7	38
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41	2 16 8	3 9 2	4 7 2	7 6 8	44 0 11	41
42	2 18 8	3 11 1	4 9 3	7 9 11	44 19 9	42
43	3 0 11	3 13 1	4 11 5	7 13 3	45 19 3	43
44	3 3 3	3 15 3	4 13 10	7 16 9	46 19 7	44
45	3 5 9	3 17 6	4 16 4	8 0 7	48 0 8	45
46	3 8 5	4 0 0	4 19 1	8 4 6	49 2 8	46
47	3 11 5	4 2 8	5 2 1	8 8 8	50 5 8	47
48	3 14 8	4 5 8	5 5 4	8 13 2	51 9 7	48
49	3 18 1	4 8 9	5 8 9	8 17 11	52 14 1	49
50	4 1 7	4 12 1	5 12 4	9 2 10	53 19 3	50
51	4 5 6	4 15 5	5 16 1	9 7 11	55 4 5	51
52	4 9 5	4 18 10	5 19 11	9 13 1	56 9 0	52
53	4 13 5	5 2 5	6 3 11	9 18 3	57 12 11	53
54	4 17 8	5 6 3	6 8 0	10 3 5	58 17 2	54
55	5 1 11	5 10 2	6 12 1	10 8 6	60 0 8	55
56	5 6 4	.....	6 14 9	10 13 7	61 3 8	56
57	5 10 11	.....	6 18 8	10 18 8	62 6 5	57
58	5 15 9	7 2 9	11 3 10	63 9 4	58
59	6 1 0	7 7 3	11 9 0	64 12 11	59
60	6 6 7	7 12 0	11 14 3	65 16 9	60

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